

Afforestation programmes in Andhra Pradesh

3040. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether financial assistance was provided to Andhra Pradesh for its afforestation programmes during the last four years;

(b) if so, the details thereof, year-wise;

(c) whether the forest cover in the State increased during the said period; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) Financial assistance provided to Andhra Pradesh for afforestation under four major Centrally Sponsored Schemes of Ministry of Environment & Forests is as under:

S.No.	Year	Rs. in lakhs
1.	1996-97	403.35
2.	1997-98	191.28
3.	1998-99	276.71
4.	1999-2000	358.26

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. According to latest State Forest Report 1999, there has been an increase of 939 sq. Km. in the forest cover in the State.

Establishment of Environment Protection Fund

3041. SHRI C.P. THIRUNAVUKKARASU: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are working on establishing any Environment Protection Fund; and

(b) if so, what is the status of the programme?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS